

I HAVE the honor to present the annual report of Gallaudet College for the year 1961-62, the first of a new series designed for our alumni, friends, and all who may have an interest in the higher education of the deaf.

THE YEAR AT GALLAUDET

Enrollment

Gallaudet opened last September with an enrollment of 493 students, the largest in its history. Preparatory students numbered 167; undergraduates, 298; and graduate students, 28. This represents an increase of 59% in new students over the previous year, and has brought an immediate review of our plans for the future. Our present plant was designed for an enrollment of six or seven hundred, a figure we did not anticipate reaching until 1970. It now appears that we will reach 600 in 1962-63. While preparing an emergency request for additional dormitories and classrooms, we have been giving considerable thought to the questions raised by this growth:

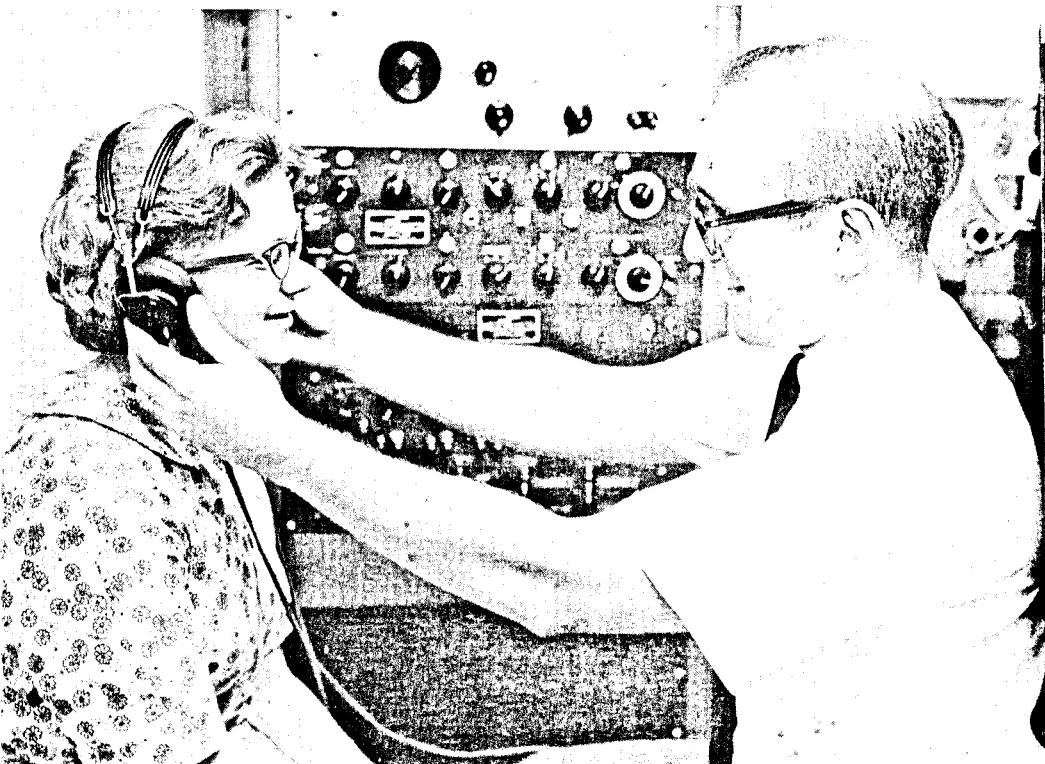
Where are the students coming from?

Our only new source is the day schools and classes of the public school system. Graduates of this system gave us 25% of our new students last year, auguring a much more cosmopolitan character for our student body, which as recently as ten years ago consisted almost entirely of graduates of the residential schools for the deaf.

The old sources are also sending more of their graduates, as their own enrollments rise and as an education at Gallaudet College continues to appear more attractive. The accreditation of the college in 1957 has had an undeniable effect in increasing this attractiveness, especially to the better students. All colleges and universities in the nation are expecting and experiencing a growing pressure for admission, as the general population rises more and more swiftly, as an ever increasing proportion of high school graduates seek a college education, and as our developing technology makes a post-high school education almost mandatory for the youth of our country. Gallaudet lies in the main stream of American society and higher education and cannot escape the forces that are exerted upon other colleges and universities.

Should Gallaudet expand?

Some colleges, facing a wave of new applicants, have decided not to admit them, since a greatly rising enrollment would stretch their financial resources—and even without lowering admission standards, would change the character of an essentially small insti-



tution. Gallaudet, we believe, must continue to admit every qualified deaf person who applies, no matter what problems growth may bring. A deaf person who seeks the sort of education we offer has nowhere else to apply.

Moreover, in our expansion, we are only doing what we ought to have done long ago. Gallaudet was founded so that deaf persons might have an equal opportunity with normally hearing persons to secure a higher education. In the early years of the college's life, deaf persons attended college in almost the same proportions as hearing persons; but during the last sixty years the proportion of deaf persons has slowly declined. Other colleges and universities during this time have experienced a 700% growth in enrollment, as related to total enrollment in the schools from which they draw their students. The enrollment of Gallaudet College, in the same period, has grown only from 1.1% to 1.5% of the total enrollment in schools and classes for the deaf.

Even if Gallaudet had been accepting every student who applied for admission, and had retained all students at our present rate, we would have done little more than double our present enrollment, and would still fall short of parity with colleges for the hearing by more than 200%. Clearly, all institutions engaged in the education of the deaf have a responsibility to their students that is not now being discharged if deaf people in the country are to enjoy equal educational opportunities with the normally hearing.

*Are we becoming a college for the
hard of hearing rather than for the deaf?*

No, we are not. Through careful screening at admissions, we have been restricting our student body to those whose loss of hearing is so severe as to preclude their success at another college or university. During the last five years more than 80% of our graduates have had a loss in their better ear of 70 or more decibels. This means that 80% of our successful students have been unable, even with a hearing aid, to understand the spoken voice. Furthermore, during this same period the proportion of the prelingual deaf (with an early onset of deafness, before the development of speech and language) has been rising. Three-fourths of our students who graduated during this time can be so classified.

*Are we relaxing our standards of admission,
to attract more students?*

Again, the answer is no. During the recent years of our most rapid growth (as a continuing study has shown), we have become more selective in admissions, taking a smaller percentage of those who apply. Furthermore, careful examination of all new students during this period has shown no deterioration in quality; if anything, there has been an improvement.

None of the college's procedures are so carefully scrutinized as those governing admissions. The reason is that in our admissions we can least afford to make a mistake, for an applicant denied admission to Gallaudet has, practically, nowhere else to turn for a higher education. Our policy is to accept any student whom we have reason to believe can succeed here. Over the years we have developed extremely sensitive instruments for determining an applicant's prospects of success. It is safe to say that no college or university in the country has superior predictive information about its applicants; but this is not surprising, in view of our long established relations with the schools that send us our students.

Curriculum

New courses in Russian, mathematics, and psychology reflect the needs and the discoveries of the age in which we live; general education in the social studies and humanities, reflecting the civilization we have inherited, has been strengthened. Two highly significant changes have been made at either end of our educational continuum. College preparatory studies have been radically re-designed, in order to give students a better preparation for college; and graduate studies in the education of the deaf have been enlarged in order to accommodate deaf students who wish to prepare themselves for teaching at other than primary levels.

Preparatory studies.

Approximately 85% of our incoming students are given a year of college preparatory work before they are admitted to the freshman class. Last September the faculty voted a two-year experiment



to determine whether students in the preparatory curriculum could reach higher standards of performance, thus improving their background for college studies and retaining a larger percentage of them for the freshman class. Much time was added to mathematics, so that all students could complete elementary algebra, intermediate algebra, and plane geometry before the end of the year. Especially well prepared students were given an introduction to modern mathematics. Pilot studies were made with programmed teaching materials. In other courses, the emphasis was shifted from a mastery of content to the acquisition of skills in reading and writing, using the materials of social studies, chemistry, and physics.

Results at the end of the first year were highly encouraging. Standards for "passing" work, on objective, nationally administered examinations, were raised to those maintained by colleges and universities generally. The increased investment in mathematics paid off handsomely; our students in intermediate algebra, for instance, scored considerably above the national average for high school students generally. Reading and writing ability, as measured by

the Tests of School and College Ability, improved at a rate fifty per cent above the national average. Furthermore, even though content was de-emphasized, last year's preparatory students scored as well as or better than preparatory students of the three years previous, when measured on standardized content examinations given to all four classes. Not only did last year's preparatory class perform better than any similar class of recent record, but a higher percentage of them were admitted to the freshman class and thus enabled to undertake a college education.

The experimental curriculum will be continued during the coming year, with modifications suggested by the last year's experience. A grant from the United States Office of Education will support a full-scale study of programmed materials in mathematics. More attention will be given to modern mathematics, with the hope of adopting it in place of all our conventional mathematics courses in the following year. Much more attention will be given to the reading and writing of English, with tutorial work for each student.

Graduate studies in the education of the deaf.

As the result of policies adopted two years previously by the faculty, the undergraduate major in the education of the deaf has been discontinued, and deaf students who wish to become teachers of the deaf will be admitted for the first time in 1962-63 as candidates for the master's degree.

Standards of admission are as strict for them as they are for hearing students; but they will follow a somewhat different course of studies that is designed to prepare them for teaching either intermediate and advanced students, or students in classes for the retarded deaf, where our graduates have been found to be exceptionally capable. Deaf students in the graduate program must all have an undergraduate major or minor in one of the liberal arts and sciences in which they expect to teach. The college, by this means, will be the first institution offering teacher-training for prospective secondary teachers of the deaf. Eleven deaf college graduates have been accepted for this program next year, all but five of them graduates of Gallaudet.

Financing an Education at Gallaudet

Costs of providing an education have risen rapidly at Gallaudet as at other colleges, but we anticipate no increase, in the near future, in our present \$900 annual charge for tuition, room and board. Our charges compare favorably with those set by other publicly supported institutions; moreover, all entering students should be able to meet them—if not from their own resources, then with the help of the state vocational rehabilitation agencies, grants-in-aid made by the college, and loans from one of several student loan funds, such as that established by the National Defense Education Act. This past year the college has appointed a student aid officer, with the responsibility for working out a financial plan for each student who seeks his help, combining support provided by the family, public agencies, college grants-in-aid, loans, and part-time work on the campus or in Washington. The college intends never to abandon its policy of accepting any qualified student, regardless of his financial resources.

Research

Nowhere are the changes in higher education more evident than in the time and money devoted to research. The demands of a scientifically based economy are felt even in the small colleges, whose faculty now have available—from government agencies and private foundations—research support that was undreamed-of in an earlier generation. Distinguished members of the Gallaudet faculty have attracted funds for research into many of the areas and aspects of deafness: in audiology, education, history, linguistics, psychology, and sociology. Several members of the faculty are engaged in joint research (genetics, psychiatry, and space medicine) with other institutions and agencies such as Harvard University, the National Institutes of Health, and the U.S. Naval School of Aviation Medicine. Gallaudet cooperates with the American Speech and Hearing Association in publishing a quarterly journal, *dsh Abstracts*, abstracts of literature in the fields of deafness, speech and hearing; the editor is a member of the Gallaudet faculty. Another of our most distinguished members continues to edit the well-known *American Annals of the Deaf*.

The computing center, with an IBM 1620 computer, established on our campus this past year with a grant from the National Science Foundation, illustrates the growing importance of research. Ten years ago such an installation would have been inconceivable in a small college. In the ten years to come, as Gallaudet continues its scientific growth, it will be indispensable.

Plant

The Kendall School, which for a long time had been scattered in buildings and parts of buildings all over the campus, finally came into its own: a beautiful complex of buildings on the north-eastern margin of the campus. A new auditorium, which promises to be one of the finest theatre buildings anywhere, should be ready for use in September. An Arts Center is on the drafting boards, as is an addition to our Hearing and Speech Center. A new field house keeps muddy feet out of the gymnasium locker rooms. But hardly do we complete one stage of construction when we must prepare for another. The influx of students will require more dormitories, more classrooms, additions to present buildings; funds for construction in the next ten years will probably exceed what has been required during the last ten.

Issues in the Higher Education of the Deaf

As the only institution in the world whose purpose is the higher education of deaf persons, we view the education of the deaf from a unique and often lonely eminence. In viewing our own function we have all sorts of assistance. Since we are the only college, we are under continual pressure to assume most if not all of the functions assumed by all the many and varied institutions of higher education in this country. And indeed this pressure is to be expected, since most deaf persons must either find at Gallaudet the sort of education they want or do without it entirely. Consequently, we must be very sure that what we are trying to do is what we ought to be doing.

Gallaudet has been from its founding a college of liberal arts and sciences. We intend to remain one, and to strive for an ever-



sharpened preception of what it means to be one. We do this not from any sense of its superiority to other kinds of institutions, but from a sense of our own identity and function. We are educating human beings for human purposes, confident that the deeper their awareness of what it means to be born into the human race, into American society of the twentieth century, the more satisfying their own lives will be to themselves and the more productive they will be to the society that has educated them. We profess the liberal arts and sciences because we believe them the best means of educating free men.

We are conscious, also, of the vocational opportunities that are opened by the education we offer—and we remember that without it, a deaf person of the highest talents has no access to a graduate school for their full development.

But what of other forms of higher education, outside of our traditions, purposes, and resources, yet equally desirable for deaf persons who do not desire what we offer?

A technical institute for the deaf?

It is no secret that a high school education no longer gives sufficient training for an adequate place in the American economy. If today's young man is to find a job that will challenge his imagination, develop his talents to higher levels of proficiency, and provide enough income for the support of a family, he needs more training than even the best high schools are prepared to offer. The student with normal hearing can obtain it, usually at a two-year community college or technical institute. The deaf student has no place to go for further studies except Gallaudet; and if he has no instinct or ability for the academic life, he should have some other choice open to him. Most warmly to be commended are the efforts of the California School for the Deaf at Riverside, to introduce its graduates into a local two year college for further vocational training. More desirable would be a technical institute for deaf students, operating from the eleventh through the fourteenth grades, to provide the technical competence necessary for an adequate place in our society. But the purposes, plant, faculty, and administration of such an institute are beyond the resources and proper aims of Gallaudet College.

Regional high schools for the deaf?

Before very much more can be achieved in the higher education of the deaf, something must be done about its underpinnings: their secondary schooling. Although a full senior high school education has long been universally available to the general population, it has not been available (with a few valiant exceptions) to deaf students. The reasons are well known. Teacher-training for the deaf emphasizes the primary years; many schools for the deaf graduate their students at the eighth or tenth grades; most of these schools are not adequately equipped in staff or facilities for secondary education. More important, their enrollments are much too small for an adequate high school program. Dr. James B. Conant points out in his report, *The American High School Today*, that a meaningful program is not financially possible for a graduating class of fewer than one hundred students.

Most of Gallaudet's new students, as has been pointed out earlier, must be given a year of college preparatory studies before

they can be admitted to the freshman class. The college is under pressure from some sources to increase this preparation to two years. Here we find ourselves in a dilemma: we would willingly improve our students' preparation for college, yet the more we do, the more we undercut the schools for the deaf, whom we continually encourage to improve their secondary offerings.

We would prefer eventually to get out of the business of secondary education. We admit students to our preparatory class only because we think they will make successful college students. Our preparatory studies are not meant to resemble an eleventh or twelfth grade curriculum. Yet they are all that is available to the great majority of graduates of schools for the deaf, who should have a full senior high school education universally available, whether or not they wish to go on to Gallaudet.

If the states in different regions of the country can combine to offer higher education of several varieties that may be beyond the resources of any single state, there is no reason why they cannot combine to establish comprehensive regional high schools for deaf students. If these schools could offer, in addition to general and vocational courses, college-preparatory studies for college-bound



students, Gallaudet would be pleased to accept their products on the basis of their grades, to abandon its entrance examination requirements, and eventually—when assured that all deaf students had an accredited senior high school education available to them—to dismantle its preparatory studies.

In the near future:

Next June, the college will be host to the International Congress on the Education of the Deaf—an event of the first importance to deaf people and their teachers all over the world. Meeting concurrently will be the Convention of American Instructors of the Deaf and the Conference of Executives of American Schools for the Deaf.

In 1964 the college will celebrate its first centennial—an event likewise of the greatest importance. We celebrate not only the vision of its founders, but more importantly, the support of the American people for any enterprise aimed at equality of opportunity for all citizens.

The year following, our big occasion will be the Tenth International Games for the Deaf, to be held on our grounds and in the much more adequate facilities of the nearby University of Maryland.

Credit where credit is due:

For all our achievements in the past year we are indebted to a hard working faculty, a loyal alumni, an interested and devoted Board of Directors, intelligent and friendly assistance in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and in the Bureau of the Budget, and finally and fundamentally to the two Houses of Congress and their members on the two appropriations committees who annually discuss our progress with us and support our efforts to improve our work.

To all of them, and to our students who recognize the value of their education here, our thanks.

LEONARD M. ELSTAD

PRESIDENT OF GALLAUDET COLLEGE

Washington, D. C., August 23, 1962

